IN THE CLAIMS

1. – 27. (cancelled)

28. (New) An automated telephone test apparatus, comprising;

test circuit means for applying test signals to a telephone line to be tested, said test circuit means including a means for applying dialing signals to said telephone line;

a memory; and

programmable means connected to said test circuit means and said memory for controlling the apparatus;

said apparatus being programmed to firstly:

store in said memory assignment data indicative of a telephone number corresponding to the telephone line to be tested;

said apparatus being programmed to secondly:

apply dialing signals to said telephone line to actuate a line identification facility at a central office;

receive line number data signals indicative of a telephone number corresponding to said telephone line from said line identification facility at said central office to which said dialing signals were applied;

decode said received line number data signals;

retrieve said stored assignment data from said memory;

compare said telephone number indicated by said retrieved assignment data with said telephone number indicated by said received and decoded line number data signal; and

indicate whether said telephone line tested was the intended subject of the test assignment.

29. (New) An apparatus according to claim 28, wherein said line number data signals are DTMF signals.

30. (New) A method of verifying a telephone line test assignment, comprising the steps of:

storing in a memory assignment data indicative of a telephone number corresponding to a telephone line to be tested;

after storing assignment data in said memory, applying dialing signals to said telephone line to actuate a line identification facility at a central office;

receiving line number data signals indicative of a telephone number corresponding to said telephone line from said line identification facility at said central office to which said dialing signals were applied;

decoding said received line number data signals;

retrieving said stored assignment data from said memory;

comparing said telephone number indicated by said retrieved assignment data with said telephone number indicated by said received and decoded line number data signals; and

indicating whether said telephone line tested was the intended subject of the test assignment.

31. (New) A method according to claim 30, wherein said line number data signals are DTMF signals.

32. (New) A method of identifying a telephone line, comprising the steps of:

receiving at a central office dialing signals transmitted via a telephone line connected to the central office;

in response to receiving said dialing signals, generating at said central office DTMF signals indicative of a telephone number which corresponds to said telephone line on which said dialing signals were transmitted, and

transmitting on said telephone line said DTMF signals generated at said central office.

33. (New) An apparatus according to claim 28, wherein the apparatus is further programmed to store in said memory data confirming that said telephone line tested was the intended subject of the test assignment.

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34. (New) A method according to claim 30, further comprising the step of storing in said memory data confirming that said telephone line tested was the intended subject of the test assignment.